

Keller City Council Candidate Responses to Questions from Hidden Lakes Residents

Question from Hidden Lakes	Response from Steve Trine	Response from Ray Brown
<p>1. Do you think your job as a member of the city council is to do what <u>you</u> think is best for Keller OR do you think your job as member of the city council is to determine and implement the wishes of the Keller citizens?</p>	<p>It is the nature of our republic form of government that we elect leaders to make decisions. In Texas, there are two uniform election dates per year, which would make it extremely difficult to conduct the city's business by voting. Electing knowledgeable, thoughtful and analytical leaders who will listen to all parties and consider all aspects of a decision is very important to the community. Making decisions that benefit the entire community sometimes means that individuals are directly affected. Fact-based decision making is the only way to ensure that the needs of the whole community are appropriately addressed.</p>	<p>The latter when possible. Some issues are determined by statute rather than the wishes of the citizens. An example of this is low income housing, which cannot be excluded by Federal statute. In my opinion, the Mayor and Council have the responsibility to make sure that any low income housing that is ever proposed for Keller meets the highest standards possible.</p>
<p>2. What is your long-range vision for Keller? How will you work toward that vision and communicate it with the community and fellow Council members?</p>	<p>Keller has become and will remain a largely bedroom community with a rural flair, and enough commercial and retail presence to provide a balanced tax base. I will work toward that vision with fellow council members, boards and commissions, as well as citizen's advisory groups. All of these means, plus newspaper, city pages, websites, etc. will remain important communication tools. You can sign up for the city newsletter at www.cityofkeller.com using the link near the bottom titled 'City News emailed to You'.</p>	<p>First, do no harm. Keller has a long history, beautiful parks, open spaces and ranchettes, and high-quality residential development. We should preserve all these things while fostering the best commercial development we can get.</p> <p>Keller's government needs to play catch-up on some of the basic necessities, and then work on a plan of debt reduction and corresponding tax reduction.</p>
<p>3. What principles or strategies do you think should guide city government and how would that be put into practice?</p>	<p>City government is established to provide services and amenities demanded by the citizens. As such, it must be responsive to their needs. The council is the policy making body responsible for implementing the electorate's requests, giving due consideration to budget and legal constraints. Honesty, integrity and accountability of council members is critical to the success of the city.</p>	<p>The Mayor, Council Members, City Manager, and city employees should remember that we are the servants of the citizens and not their masters. All citizens, business, and potential newcomers should be treated with respect and dignity and their desires accommodated if feasible.</p>

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<p>4. It has been said Hidden Lakes building standards are too high for development in our city. Do agree or disagree and why? Any specific examples?</p>	<p>I consider Hidden Lakes to be a very well-thought out planned community, and believe that its building standards enhance the appearance and property values of the community, and of Keller as a whole.</p>	<p>I do not agree that the building standards are too high. The market place has spoken and Hidden Lakes is approaching build-out. However, all of Keller is not like Hidden Lakes and should be treated somewhat differently. For example, in North Keller where many homes are built on 1 to 10 acres or more the standards should be different from those in a sub-division of ¼ or ½ acre lots. Solid wood or masonry fences are appropriate on the smaller lots while pipe and cable fences are appropriate on the larger tracts.</p>
<p>5. Is there or will there be a retail/business office master plan like Southlake? How will you incorporate citizen input and communicate that input to the citizens and potential businesses?</p>	<p>Southlake's master plan was developed with input from the Keller Town Center plan. Keller Town Center was never intended to be the heavy retail area that exists in Southlake because Keller lacked the highway and thoroughfare access that are critical to the success of the retail community. The plans for Keller Town Center and the Keller Old Town district were put together using citizen groups for feedback as well as paid consultants to both collect the input from the citizens and assemble it into a whole that is working for Keller.</p>	<p>We have one in which citizens and business had input—it is called Town Center. The business plan has been sacrificed to multi-family residences in an attempt by the Mayor, Council, and staff to meet the financial requirements of the TIF.</p>
<p>6. Please tell us your opinion on the QuikTrip that will be built at Bear Creek and Davis. Should it be located there since the majority of residents in Hidden Lakes opposed the plan?</p>	<p>My opponent has stated (candidate's forum) that approving the QT was the only action the council could have taken. During the discussion of the issue at the council, it was clear that there was significant opposition and it played a major part in my own deliberation. Ultimately, I decided to honor the property owner's rights to develop their property. In doing so, I may not have given enough weight to the area aesthetics.</p>	<p>While there was considerable opposition to Quik Trip by the residents of Hidden Lakes, the council did not have any choice but to approve it since the property zoning allowed a service station and Quicktrip met all the requirements of the SUP.</p>
<p>7. Is there a master plan for the development of the Davis Blvd corridor in Keller? If not, what would you like to see happen there?</p>	<p>There is no existing plan for the Davis Blvd corridor. Creating one would require that the property owners agree to its implementation and be willing to cooperate. Consolidation of the properties involved into single ownership would be the best way to ensure that a plan could be developed.</p>	<p>To my knowledge, there is not a development master plan for Davis Blvd. Reasonable and realistic zoning should ensure good development.</p>

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<p>8. What plans do you have to ensure safety along Bear Creek Road between Keller Smithfield and Davis Blvd?</p>	<p>As a thoroughfare that serves a number of subdivisions, actions taken on the road are restricted by state regulations. Our best approach is a good police presence coupled with community relation efforts to impress on everyone the importance of proper and careful use of the road. As traffic counts increase, other options may open up to us, so ongoing monitoring of the traffic and cross-street movements will continue to be important</p>	<p>Pedestrian crosswalks with button-activated signals at the clubhouse and possibly another location.</p>
<p>9. How can Hidden Lakes work more closely and effectively with the City of Keller for our mutual benefit?</p>	<p>The Keller City Council and KISD School board are the two most important governing bodies affecting our quality of life and property values. Being knowledgeable and informed about city and KISD affairs is very important to everyone in HL. By signing up for city email news and reading the City Newsletter, HL residents can stay informed. Don't hesitate to email (stine@cityofkeller.com) or phone (817-658-6118) your council members. Staff is also available to answer questions</p>	<p>The phrasing of this question implies that Hidden Lakes is not a part of the City of Keller. What benefits one should benefit the other. Perhaps Keller should be divided into wards to ensure that every part of the city has equal representation on the City Council. I am not aware of any City Council member who lives in the Hidden Lakes part of Keller.</p>
<p>10. How do you feel about multi-family housing and low cost housing projects?</p>	<p>Virtually all of Keller's Multi-Family and low-cost zoning is built out, and I don't anticipate the need for any zoning changes that would add more. Keller has a better housing mix than some of our neighbors, and current land prices make it unlikely any additional low cost housing will develop.</p>	<p>I think we have allowed too many multi-family housing units. While we have no low cost housing projects, by Federal law we cannot prohibit one.</p>
<p>11. What will your priorities be if elected?</p>	<p>To continue to work on infrastructure improvements in Keller such as the roads program (including Keller-Smithfield and Rufe Snow), water projects such as completion of the new water tower service plane and sewer and drainage projects. Expansion of the fire station capabilities is also a top priority, but will either require a longer development time frame or an increase in taxes to support the staffing/equipping costs. In addition, I will remain focused on continuing to attract quality retail and commercial businesses to Keller.</p>	<p>Fire stations, road improvement, continue upgrading police department, economic development.</p>

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12. Councilman Trine: What specific actions have you taken that improve Keller's property values?	The rolling 5-year street improvement program, Police station expansion, The Keller Pointe, improved and expanded parks, improved water, sewer and drainage.	--
13. Ray Brown: Do you agree with the actions of Mayor Tandy and Councilman Trine and what, if anything, would you do different to improve property values?	--	I am not aware of anything Mayor Tandy or Councilman Trine did to improve property values.
14. What is your opinion of the Uniform Development Code?	The UDC is an outgrowth of Keller's building and development codes and makes the process and regulations more understandable and user-friendly for property owners and developers. I believe that Keller's high development standards have played a key role in making Keller an attractive, livable community while not being an inhibitor to attracting business development.	The UDC is a good document, but it is not the Ten Commandments carved in stone. It should be as flexible as possible to encourage meaningful development. The city staff is currently working on possible revisions to the UDC. Hopefully, the new UDC, city staff, Mayor and Council and the various commissions will make Keller "the place to be".
15. What contributions have you made to Keller over the past two years?	Aside from my activity as a city council member, I am a past member of the Keller Rotary Club. While active, I played a key role in the creation of the Keller Veterans Memorial Park. In addition, I participate in various charitable activities, Boy Scouts, and coach youth sports.	I have made no contributions in the past two years. I volunteered for the P & Z, served over six years, then stepped back to allow other volunteers to make their contributions. When I stepped down in the late 90's I felt as though my service was complete. However, in recent years I feel that the Mayor and City Council have drifted from their primary responsibilities.
16. In the debate Tuesday evening there were conflicting accounts of Mr. McGrail's support of attracting businesses into Keller (i.e. Cotton Patch restaurant and What-a-Burger) and Mr. Brown's approval of the development of Hidden Lakes sub-division. Please clarify this discrepancy.	The public record shows that Mr. Brown voted against the Hidden Lakes development. My recollection of Mr. McGrail's negative role in Cotton Patch and other business applications differs substantially from his memory of the events. Mr. McGrail and Mr. Brown may not have been prepared to answer those questions.	The record should be clear—while I was chairman of P & Z, Hidden Lakes was passed and sent to the council with the recommendation that the number of smaller lots should be decreased. The council did not accept our recommendation for fewer smaller lots.

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<p>17. Are there plans to widen Rufe Snow from Bear Creek Parkway to Bursey Road and do you/would you support that street project?</p>	<p>Yes and Yes. The Rufe Snow widening from Bear Creek Parkway to (actually) Rapp Road is in the current 5-year Capital Improvement Plan. The engineering is planned for the next fiscal year, beginning in Oct. 2007. The council will need to juggle the costs of building/staffing a fire station with the road costs. Also, Rufe Snow is on the list of road projects waiting for Tarrant County funding, which may provide relief on costs and affect the schedule.</p>	<p>This project was approved in the County bond program last year and should be completed.</p>
<p>18. Aside from a “freedom of speech” argument, what is your opinion of the advisability and impact on the community resulting from sitting members of the City Council criticizing the Mayor and other council members on a public website?</p>	<p>Freedom of speech issues aside, I think that such actions are divisive within the community and have a strong negative impact with the business community, signaling as they do that the city government is unstable and unreliable. These behaviors have been very damaging to KISD and their impacts are being felt within the City of Keller particularly in our economic development and in the loss of our City Manager. The City Council has an ongoing public forum for debate (i.e., the council sessions) which should be the primary arena for discussion of issues before the council.</p>	<p>I think the “criticism” is more an exposure of facts to the citizens that Mayor Tandy and others would rather keep quiet. The website is public and anyone can post their comments on any subject. This type of free exchange of opinions and ideas is crucial to our freedom.</p>
<p>Additional Statement</p>	<p>[None provided]</p>	<p>I thank the residents of Hidden Lakes for the quality of these questions and the opportunity to respond. I ask for your support in this election and promise you that I will look out for the interests of all Keller citizens. You will notice that Pat McGrail and I agree on most issues. I fully support Pat and he supports me. Thank YOU for YOUR support!</p>